

2017

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Professor gives ‘Last Lecture’ on power of passion

Gray Phillips
@THEGAMECOCK

“I’ve decided I’m going to die in the classroom. It might be a little unsettling to the class right there, but if I can time it right, do it early enough in the class, they’ll be glad to be let out.”

This is how Professor Thomas Hughes responded to questions about his retirement in his “Last Lecture.” Much to the satisfaction of his students, Hughes plans to continue his streak of 30 consecutive one-year teaching contracts for USC. He was participating in the “Last Lecture” program here at USC, which requests that certain professors nominated by students give a formal lecture as though it was the last one they would ever give. The program aims to connect faculty with students in a unique and more personal way by giving professors the opportunity to speak on any topic of their choice.

Hughes’ popularity could be seen by the crowd of students which rushed into the historic Gressette Room of Harper College in the minutes before his lecture began. Many greeted him with enthusiasm while others chatted in anticipation. Morgan Burman, a third-year finance and global supply chain and operations management student, explained that her experience in Hughes’ business law course is what drew her to the lecture series.

“He would always engage us in these really cool arguments, and he would take a poll of the room and see what we all thought about the situation so that was really fun,” she said.

The School of Accounting lecturer has won seven Mortar Board awards, been recognized by the Princeton Review and named an Elliot Davis Fellow. He was first nominated for this series in 2006 but decided that it was worth it to participate again.

“I think that part of being in a community is participation,” Hughes said.

He said that in this lecture he wanted to look back on his past in the hope that he can understand where he is now. His talk focused on what has shaped him as a person, including his childhood as a devoted baseball fan and his young adult appreciation for the literary songwriting of Bob Dylan. He noted that experiences like these and others were just as important to him as his many awards.

Hughes expressed his passion for life and for teaching.

“I mentioned during the talk is that I’m certainly eligible to retire and at some point, financially you’re foolish not to retire and I don’t care because I like what I do,” he said.



SG BREAKS RECORD FOR NUMBER OF SENATE CANDIDATES



Photos by Brittany Franceschina and Larissa Johnson / THE DAILY GAMECOCK

Brittany Franceschina
@BRITTA_FRAN

Student Government broke the record for the most candidates to ever file for an election. According to Elections Commissioner Monty Vallabhapuram, there are currently 70 candidates and he’s confident that number will remain the same through elections.

“It’s the most anyone’s ever heard of. This is absolutely outstanding,” Attorney General Cory Alpert said.

Alpert attributes this success to the current Student Government members. The current administration gained recognition through their very public initiatives like Cockstock, It’s On Us

and Lead the Way.

“Primarily, it’s the emergence of Student Government as an entity that actually matters on campus,” Alpert said. “I think under this past administration, Student Government has been a lot more visible and because of that people really care a lot more, people are engaged a lot more, people want to be more involved.”

In addition, the elections commission tried new methods of recruiting candidates, including having candidates file outside of the Student Government office instead of inside, like in years past. This brought in many students who walked by and were influenced to file. The commission also held a showcase on

Greene Street to bring attention to elections. Vallabhapuram believes the implementation of a marketing strategy is what contributed to the high number of candidates.

“Two phases of marketing: one to market for candidates to file and one to market the actual elections. That was the whole plan of it and it’s been working so far,” Vallabhapuram said.

Vallabhapuram recognized the main purpose of the marketing plan was to engage students. So he enlisted the help of Marketing Outreach Chair Sam Shea and Publicity Chair Hanna Powers, whose ideas worked toward that goal by keeping events well-attended and updating

Twitter and Instagram daily.

“This year there’s also been a lot more emphasis in encouraging candidates to be more creative in how they campaign, and I think allowing a little bit more of that freedom has been very beneficial,” Alpert said.

Around 95 candidates originally filed, but as is normally expected, people dropped out either because they were ineligible or they chose to withdraw.

“You see that in the senate race a lot. A lot of people run but don’t understand completely what all the positions and what everything entails, duties and responsibilities,” Vallabhapuram said.

Flu season proves worse than years past for USC students



Leland McElveen / THE DAILY GAMECOCK

Brittany Franceschina
@BRITTA_FRAN

Along with death and taxes, flu season is just one of those certainties in life. However, students and health center professionals agree this year has been worse than normal.

“At least 10 people I know that I’m close friends with got the flu around the same time that I did, so I think this year is way worse than previous years,” fourth-year accounting student Mary Kate Nicholson said.

Van Haygood, director of clinical and ancillary services at Thompson Student Health Center, said that there’s been a little more flu than in years past, but “not to the point that we’re overly concerned.”

The Health Center gave around 4,000 flu shots this year, which is a record for USC. Approximately 700 students were tested for the flu and about 55 percent tested positive.

Nicholson was one of those students who tested positive.

“I never had the flu before, and at first I thought it was the common cold,” she said, “but then when I had to Uber to go to my class, I realized it

was something more.”

Nicholson said she did not get the flu shot but she would be getting it now.

Haygood said that someone can still get the flu even if they’ve had the vaccine, but it is much less severe than if they hadn’t. Second-year pre-pharmacy student Abby Mellott received the flu shot and still contracted type A and type B of the virus.

“The doctor told me that if I hadn’t gotten a flu shot I probably would’ve been hospitalized, because it’s pretty rare to get both types,” Mellott said.

The Health Center generally prescribes the Tamiflu for those who test positive and have been experiencing symptoms for 24-48 hours. However, if the symptoms have been present for longer, the antiviral is not effective, and they instead recommend other cold medicines to treat the symptoms.

The Health Center is still offering flu shots, but they’re not as beneficial now because a person’s body doesn’t adjust for the vaccine to take effect for about 3-4 weeks.

Referendum on SG elections ballot would add fourth executive position

Brandon Wong
@THEGAMECOCK

The ballot for the upcoming Student Government election Feb. 14-15 will contain not only the candidates for executive and senate positions, but also a referendum to add a new executive position — speaker of the student senate.

The referendum proposes a speaker of the student senate to take over the vice president’s administrative obligations with the

senate, including presiding over the senate and overseeing the passage of new legislation. The new position will allow the vice president to spend more time working on initiatives for the student body.

Student Body Vice President Ross Lordo, who is currently running for student body president, said that the vice president has historically focused on the senate but that his goal once he came into office was to redefine the role.

“I want to make sure that we can focus on specific goals and ideas that we want to achieve,” he said.

Over the course of his term as vice president, Lordo has worked on initiatives such as additional options for the Greek meal plan, classroom improvement programs and mid-term course evaluations — initiatives for which the speaker of the student senate would be responsible.

Student Body President Michael Parks said Lordo has been an

unconventional vice president, but “in a good way.”

“He has run the day to day oscillations of the student senate,” Parks said, “but he’s also pursued his own initiatives and projects that he worked on and promised in the campaign.”

He added that the referendum will free up the vice president to work with the administration rather than

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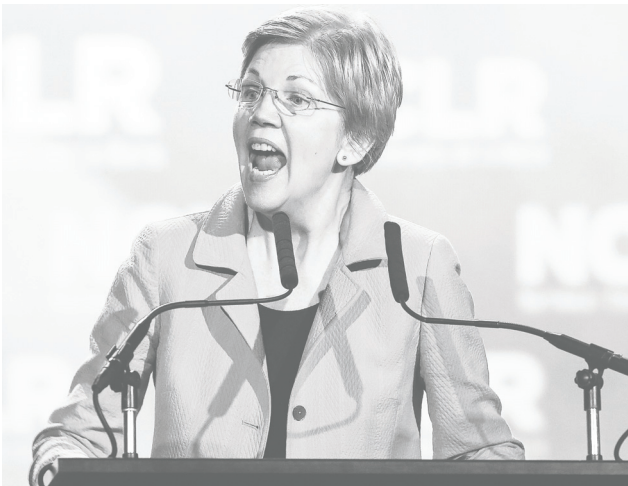
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IN BRIEF

“They can shut me up, but they can't change the truth.”

— Sen. Elizabeth Warren after Senate Republicans voted to halt her remarks on the grounds that they were impugning another senator



Courtesy of Tribune News Service



Courtesy of Tribune News Service

“Something that Hitler created is a sign of evil – it’s not a conversation piece.”

— Former state Sen. Joel Lourie about the painting by Adolf Hitler removed from a prominent USC Board of Trustees home



Courtesy of Tribune News Service

“Had Democrats been in charge, our roads would have been fixed a decade or more ago.”

— Sen. Vincent Sheheen on State Democrat’s proposal to repair the states infrastructure

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the student senate.

Sen. Jay Selesky of the College of Engineering and Computing, who is currently running for student body vice president, said that the speaker would be responsible for connecting the right people to the senate's initiatives and legislation.

"This means there will be better

quality and more total initiatives coming out of our student senate," Selesky said.

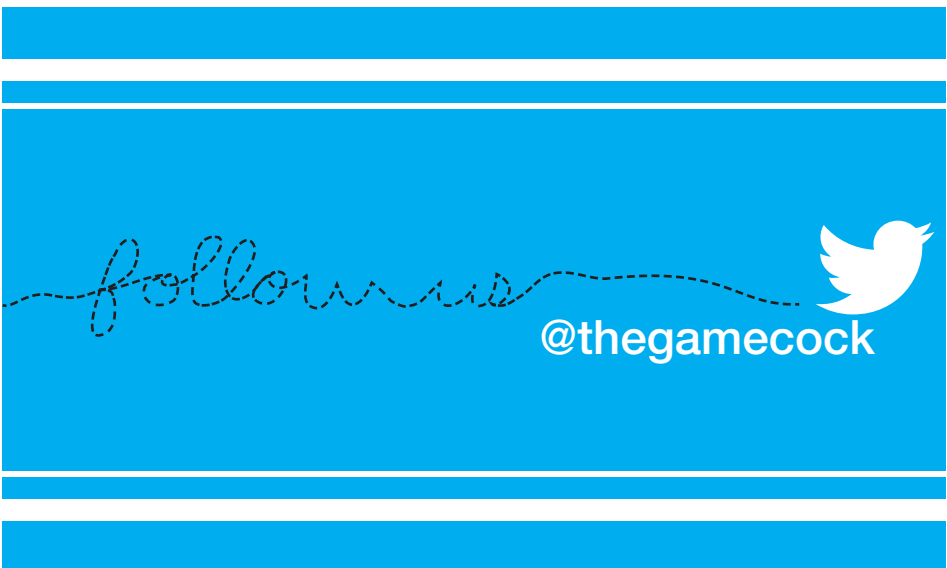
Student Government has attempted to create a fourth executive position in past years, but this is the first time it has passed through senate and is to be voted on by the student body. According to Attorney General Corey Alpert, Student Government worked to

phrase the question as neutrally as possible and it will read on the ticket as: "Should Student Government have a speaker of the student senate position?" Students will have the option to vote "yes" or "no."

The referendum needs a majority vote from all voting students to pass. Parks encouraged all students to vote on the referendum, noting that all voters who abstain from voting

on the referendum will be counted as opposed to the referendum. If the referendum passes, the inaugural speaker of the student senate will be elected during the next election cycle for the 2018-2019 school year.

— *Debbie Clark also contributed to this article.*



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valentine's day

TABLE FOR ONE

A GUIDE FOR THOSE GOING SOLO



Courtesy of NBC

‘Ovaries before brovaries’: Celebrating Galentine’s Day

Caitlin Burnham
@CAITLINABURNHAM

While February may be known as the month of love, not all of that love has to be romantic. On Feb. 13, some time should be reserved for appreciating your female friends on the unofficial holiday Galentine’s Day. This term was coined in the popular comedy television show “Parks and Recreation” by Leslie Knope, the female protagonist. She dedicates an entire day to her friends by giving thoughtful gifts, taking them to brunch and showing them how much they mean to her. In her words, Galentine’s Day is for “ladies celebrating ladies.” Ever since the Galentine’s episode aired in 2010, Galentine’s Day has evolved to be a holiday celebrated by even those that don’t watch “Parks and Recreation.” For single and committed women alike, this day is a reminder that your girlfriends deserve just as much time and consideration as your significant

other does. So this year, plan to set a little bit of time aside for your gal pals. Exchange gifts, organize some time together and make sure to spend lots of time telling your friends how great they are. From personal experience, I know that some chocolate and a few compliments to boost my ego a bit certainly go a long way in helping me feel appreciated. Because let’s be real, what girl doesn’t want to eat chocolate and be reminded of how awesome she is right before Valentine’s Day? But most importantly, Galentine’s Day is a great holiday to take part in because it helps remind us of how important girlfriends are. They are the ones who surround you and have your back when you need it most — like when you need someone to binge-watch “Parks and Recreation” with you. So, remember the wise words of Leslie Knope, “ovaries before brovaries,” when planning your Galentine’s Day this February.

COLUMN

Valentine’s Day told by a hopeless(ly single) romantic

Alli McLeod
@ALLIHM

February is the month I associate with being constantly taunted by chocolates, stuffed bears and cheesy cards that I know I won’t be receiving. For all of us who are chronically single at this time of year, Feb. 14 is a day that we merely have to power through before we get to discount chocolate and the much more bearable St. Patrick’s Day paraphernalia. If you’re anything like me, there are all sorts of ways to deal with the holiday. The first thing I tell myself is: “I am a strong independent woman who don’t need no man.” Usually I couple this with a round of “treat yo’self,” because I’m a strong independent woman who still deserves to be spoiled, even if I am single. When that doesn’t work — because let’s face it, it’s not a good enough rationalization when there’s free chocolate on the line — I try another route. “It’s just a Hallmark holiday,

invented to make us gullible consumers spend money!” I tell myself, “I should be glad that I’m alone, it means I’m not giving in to the marketing scam!” Well, maybe it’s not all that bad. Our traditions stem from a story that is rather sweet, or the one that I prefer is, even though we do celebrate love on the anniversary of his death. Legend has it that St. Valentine was imprisoned in 270 A.D. by Roman Emperor Claudius II and fell in love with his jailer’s daughter during his time there. Before he died, he wrote her a love letter signed “from your Valentine.” Alas, as much as I fight it, I still want to believe in the kind of love that Valentine supposedly had, and every year I remain hopeful that someone will be my valentine. Until then, though, I and all of the other single romantics out there can sit and watch romance movies and cry until we come to our senses and realize that Valentine’s chocolates fill the void much better than “The Notebook” — even if they are just from our moms.

TABLE FOR TWO

CONGRATS, YOU’RE NOT ALONE

Alli McLeod
@ALLIHM

Valentine’s day can be pretty confusing. It’s not quite like a milestone month or an anniversary, but there’s always pressure to give a gift, and when you’re a broke college student, showing that special someone that you’re thinking of them on V-Day can be hard. With that in mind, one solution to being broke but in love (or in like, as the case may be) is “DIY.” Making your gifts is a perfect way to show your significant other that you care because the effort makes it mean more — even if it isn’t pretty, it’s from you, and that’s what makes it special. If you want to spoil your valentine without spoiling your finances, here are some fun ideas that won’t max out your February budget.

A handwritten letter

Though this was the norm back when St. Valentine was alive, it’s a sadly dying art in our digital age. Writing down all of your cheesy, mushy feelings on paper can make your significant other’s day. If you want to keep up with our generation’s norms, though, a long heartfelt “good morning” text would probably go over well, too. This pairs well with the ever-popular flowers and chocolates. **Homemade scratch-off cards** It can be “Things I Love About You” or a cute card with redeemable vouchers for things like a back rub or a night in, kind of like the “IOU” coupons you may have given your mom as a kid. Either way it could be just what your valentine would love. To make your card a scratch off, mix equal parts dish soap and acrylic

Inexpensive Valentine’s Day gift ideas



paint, place scotch tape or contact paper over the message, and paint the mixture over the tape. When it’s dry, you can scratch it off with a coin just like a lottery ticket. **A collage or picture** If you and your significant other are avid photographers of your relationship, this could be really simple. You can frame a picture or make a collage; prints of pictures cost 20 or 30 cents at photo centers like Wal-Mart, CVS or Walgreens. **Candy** Chocolates are the standard, but if you want to get creative, find a mug or jar and fill it with your valentine’s favorite candy. You can even add in festive decorations like cut-out hearts, ribbons and a card that has some sort of heartfelt play on words that relates to the candy.

THE PERFECT ROMANTIC

playlist

- With Valentine’s Day quickly approaching, the Arts & Culture staff compiled a list of all of our favorite love songs. Give them a listen if you want to start feeling romantic or if you want to wallow in self pity. Check out The Daily Gamecock Spotify account “thedailygamecock” to listen to these songs.
- “**ULYSSES**” // JOSH GARRELS
Picked by William Outlaw
 - “**SELF CONTROL**” // FRANK OCEAN
Picked by Jonathan Franklin
 - “**CRAZY LUCKY**” // BETTER THAN EZRA
Picked by Caitlin Burnham
 - “**YOU AND I**” // INGRID MICHAELSON
Picked by Mattie Hibbs
 - “**HEAD OVER BOOTS**” // JON PARDI
Picked by Alli McLeod
 - “**LOVE ON TOP**” // BEYONCE
Picked by Grace Batton
 - “**ALWAYS BE MY BABY**” // MARIAH CAREY
Picked by Taylor Evans
 - “**HAVE WE MET BEFORE**” // TOM ROSENTHAL
Picked by Jenna Schiferl
 - “**RIDE THE AIR**” // BRENT WALSH
Picked by Darby Hallman
 - “**JUST LIKE HONEY**” // THE JESUS AND MARY CHAIN
Picked by Alex Wyatt



Courtesy of Carolina Productions
At last year's event, six students participated in the Carolina Productions competition.

Preview: Comedy Competition with Joel Kim Booster

Mattie Hibbs
@TDG_ARTS

Carolina Productions will present a comedy competition in search of USC's best student comedian. Taking place on Monday, Feb. 13, the show will pull together several acts to perform in front of a live audience and three judges.

Second-year broadcast journalism major Jessie Ary is the Comedy Coordinator for Carolina Productions and one of the key organizers of the event.

"It's basically a USC version of 'Last Comic Standing,'" Ary said.

The competition will be comprised of finalists who have already gone through an audition process, though there is no cap on how many are allowed to be in the show. "I didn't want to limit the event," Ary said. "We're going to put through who we think are the top few from USC and see how the audience reacts on Monday."

The judging panel consists of a faculty member, the student body president and the reigning champ from last year's competition. But it's not only the judges who determine the winners — audience reaction is taken into account and included in the scoring system. The direct impact of a live audience is what makes stand-up comedy such a unique experience and, according to Jessie Ary, what makes it special.

"If you don't see it in person, you won't understand," Ary said. "Everyone should try it ... if you like SNL, it's very similar, and it's very fun."

Stand-up comedian Joel Kim Booster will host the event. Having previously performed on Conan, he

is sure to keep the audience laughing between sets and will bring an air of professional comedy to the show.

As for the student line-up, the acts range in experience from beginners to well-seasoned upperclassmen. The humor will also vary widely — from dry quips to witty puns — and each comedian will bring something different to the table.

By the end of the night the judges will determine a first-place winner, who will claim the title of funniest student at USC, and a runner-up. Both first- and second-place winners will be awarded meet-and-greets with bigger acts that come to campus. First place earns two meet and greets: one with comedian Nathan Fielder, who is putting on a show in April, and another that they can use for any talent Carolina Productions brings to USC in the future. Second place will get one meet and greet with a comedian of their choice who comes to USC; this would also include Nathan Fielder, should the runner-up choose to redeem it then.

In addition to the punchy fun of stand-up comedy, there are other reasons the show is worth attending. Jessie Ary emphasized that it is important to support student comedians at USC.

"You just never know how far someone is going to make it, and it would just be really cool if one of our own got into the field more professionally," Ary said.

Slated for 8 p.m. in Russell House Theater, the show will certainly bring a smile to your face at the time of the week we all need it most — Monday evening. The event is free for students.

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President Trump ran his highly successful campaign on promises to restore America’s lost greatness. “Make America Great Again” was a brilliant marketing strategy because of its vagueness. There are a lot of conflicting idealized versions of the past that he was able to bring together using it. However, the vagueness of his trademark promise gives him significant leeway to do whatever he wants and claim that it is restoring American greatness.

For me, the main problem comes with the word “again,” a crucial part of Mr. Trump’s slogan. He is trying, apparently, not so much to bring “progress” to America as to restore a past America that is happier, more respected and more secure than we are today. The problem is that this America arguably never existed and certainly never did without significant drawbacks, like land grabbing from Native Americans, institutionalized racism and the threat of eminent nuclear holocaust.

I’m not trying to bash America’s past. There’s much to be proud of in our nation’s history. But the way Trump is conducting his first days in office seems to be bringing back not the glory days but the shameful episodes in America’s history — the things which America was great in spite of, not because of. I’ll provide a few examples below.

Trump’s now-challenged ban on travel and immigration from Muslim-majority countries echoed U.S. immigration restrictions in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when Congress passed laws banning Chinese and Japanese immigrants and restricted immigration from southern and eastern Europe, whose inhabitants were held to be racially inferior. Trump’s ban was ostensibly for security reasons and stems from the twisted logic that, since most terror attacks are committed by Muslims, we ought to keep them out of the country. This ignores the fact, documented by the Cato Institute, that from “1975-2015, the United States admitted approximately 700,000 asylum-seekers and 3.25 million refugees,” of which only “four asylum-seekers and 20 refugees later became terrorists and launched attacks on US soil.” So the odds of

newly arrived refugees turning terrorist, especially given the stringent process of background checks, is incredibly low.

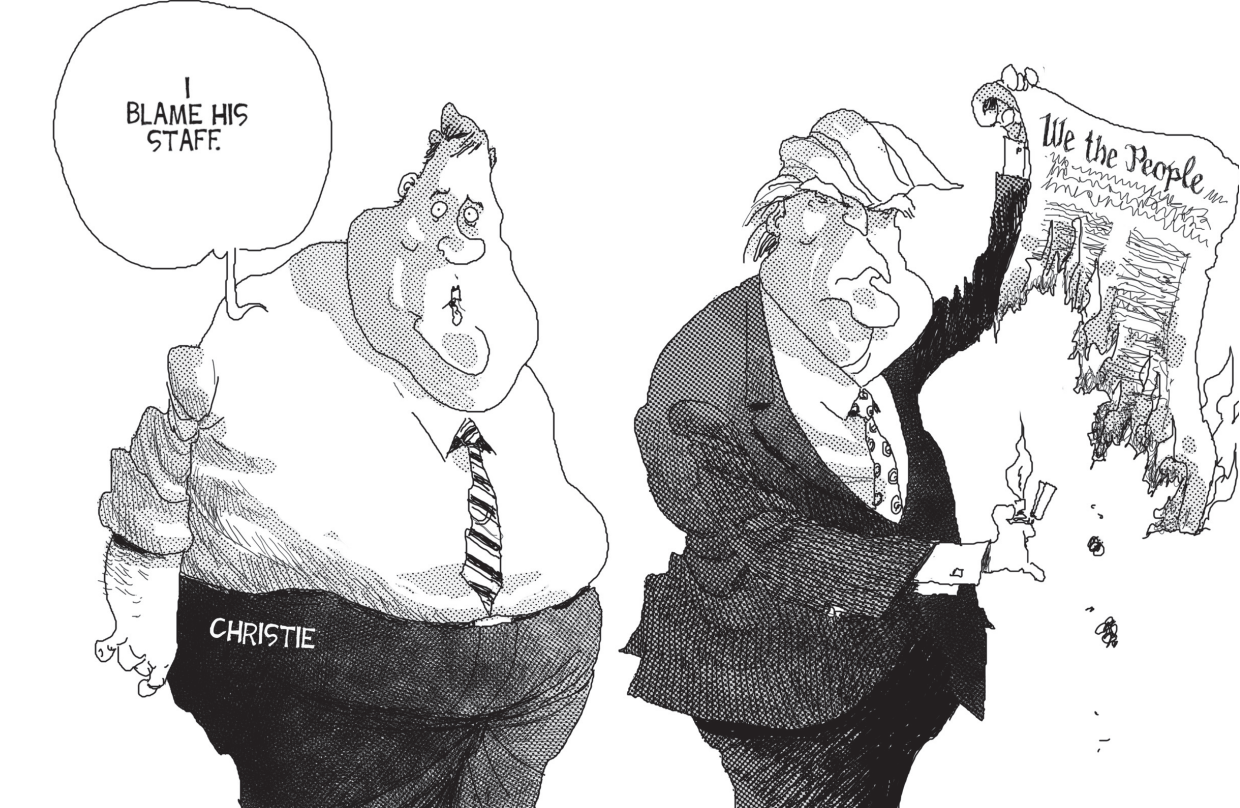
And while the ban would have done nothing to bolster national security, it may have had or still might have the unintended consequence of making the U.S.’ substantial Muslim population a more fertile recruiting ground for extremists as government policy and public perception alienates and demonizes Muslims.

Trump’s comments about torture made during the campaign and his consideration of reopening CIA black sites used to torture terrorist suspects demonstrates that he believes it necessary to use extreme measures to defeat the extremists of the I.S. and other radical jihadist groups. Unfortunately, it is not an original thought. In our struggle against the savagery of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan during World War II, the U.S. conducted bombing raids on non-military targets, leveling historic cities like Dresden, Tokyo, Hiroshima and Nagasaki and killing hundreds of thousands of civilians. We won the war and defeated unspeakable evils but at a steep cost. Let us not once again forsake moral superiority to achieve victory, for if the butchers of the I.S. succeed, even in defeat, in dragging the U.S. down to their level, they will be the real winners.

Trump’s comments suggesting that NATO, the organization the U.S. pioneered to put a check on Russia, is obsolete, and that long-time U.S. allies like Japan and South Korea should have to pay more for U.S. protection are reminiscent of the America First movement prior to World War II, which advocated for isolationism in the face of Germany’s and Japan’s aggression on the grounds that it wasn’t our land being taken and our populace slaughtered. While things aren’t quite as bad now as in the 1930s, his comments suggest a cynical abdication of America’s commitment to justice and human rights in favor of national self-interest.

In all the cases above, both past and present, the U.S. let self-interest trump (pardon the pun) American principles with tragic results. So if Trump really wants to make America great again, he’ll recognize that America is greatest when it’s putting its lofty principles of equality, liberty and justice into practice at home and promoting them abroad, not turning inward in self-interest.

HENEMAN THE STAR-LEDGER



Right-wing extremism is an ignored threat



Trump and his ideological backers, particularly the “alt-right,” made a massive deal this year regarding the threat of “radical Islamic terrorism.” However, what they seem to be missing is the growing radicalization within their own ideologically charged ranks. Last week, a man named Alexandre Bissonnette opened fire inside a mosque in Quebec, killing six and wounding eight. Bissonnette’s far-right views were no secret and included support for Donald Trump and Marine Le Pen, as well as opposition to refugees and feminists. Of course, this is in no way asserting that the average Trump supporter or “alt-right”-er has anything to do with such appalling violence; rather, I believe that such incidents of hate, among many others, bring to light a disturbing trend of far-right radicalization within the U.S. and abroad.

The “alt-right,” as defined by the Southern Poverty Law Center, “is a set of far-right ideologies, groups and individuals whose core belief is that ‘white identity’ is under attack by multicultural forces.” This makes the “alt-right,” essentially, a white nationalist movement. There seems to be much ambiguity, even within the movement, about what its core ideological tenants are, however. As a result, the “alt-right” is a coalition of ideological views ranging from isolationism, protectionism and “America First” to radical white supremacy.

The ambiguity is itself not directly an issue, but the resulting intellectual chaos caused by it has allowed the movement to become a driver of radicalization. For example, a conservative could get pulled into the movement by the relatively moderate “alt-right” writings of Milo Yiannopoulos. From there, they could then be exposed to far more radical viewpoints, such as those of Richard Spencer. Spencer,

who you might remember getting punched during Trump’s inauguration, has argued in favor of “‘peaceful ethnic cleansing’ to halt the ‘deconstruction’ of European culture.” While exposure by no means automatically results in radicalization, exposure certainly helps pave the way.

Much of the “alt-right” exists outside of high-profile figures like Spencer and Yiannopoulos in online forums. Within these forums, radical “alt-right” members have formed their own communities, allowing them to express their personal views with a degree of anonymity. Users are protected, generally by making accounts, and can separate their public and private lives from their online presence. It is within these forums that further radicalization occurs.

“Online forums with an ‘alt-right’ and far-right presence have become hotbeds for radicalization.”

Online radicalization, whether it be radicalization to join the IS or radicalization to attack a mosque, follows a similar casual mechanism. A study by the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence concluded that, “[The internet] creates a new social environment in which otherwise unacceptable views and behavior are normalized. Surrounded by other radicals, the Internet becomes a virtual ‘echo chamber’ in which the most extreme ideas and suggestions receive the most encouragement and support.” Through this mechanism, online forums with an “alt-right” and far-right presence have become hotbeds for radicalization.

Online forums such as Reddit, Voat and Stormfront, to name a few, have large online presences of radical “alt-right” members

in various subsections of the websites. Take, for example, Reddit. This forum has had a particularly nasty track record of racist and bigoted members and subreddits. One of the most flagrant of these was the subreddit called /r/ altright which “often made inflammatory remarks about a variety of marginalized groups and many espoused views in the white supremacist/national socialist spectrum,” according to Bryan Menegus’ article “Reddit Says Goodnight to ‘Alt-Right’ Community [Updates].” They were eventually shut down by the website for doxing, or releasing other people’s personal information without their consent. That might not be direct violent action, but doxing has led to right-wing violence in the past.

Reddit is a relatively mild case. Stormfront, on the other hand, is much worse. Stormfront’s motto is “White Pride Worldwide,” and the website has come to be known as the home of possibly the most radical of the radical in right-wing extremists on the internet. So much so, in fact, that Stormfront has been linked to nearly 100 hate-crime murders.

If you replaced radical right-wing extremists with radical Islamic extremists, this would become, as it already has, the number one priority of the GOP and the Trump administration. Instead, radical right-wing extremism, which has killed more people in the United States in the past 15 years than radical Islamic extremism, has been ignored entirely. If Islamic extremists were stockpiling weapons, shooting up religious centers, plotting and carrying out bombings, attacking medical professionals, forming militias, attacking and harassing religious minorities, rapidly expanding recruitment and infiltrating our police forces in the same way that right-wing extremists have, the response would undoubtedly be different. This dangerous radicalization is festering within the “alt-right,” especially online. So, President Trump, are you going to finally mention radical right-wing terrorism?

LETTER TO THE EDITOR REQUIREMENTS

Letters to the editor must not exceed 300 words. Students must include their full name, major and year. Faculty and staff must include their full name, position and department. Community members must include their full name and applicable job title. Verifiable

statements of fact must include at least one source; if we cannot verify a statement of fact, your letter will not be published until the writer implements necessary changes or provides reputable sources for any facts in question. Letters are edited for clarity, style and grammar.

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Amanda Geiger never saw the drunk driver.

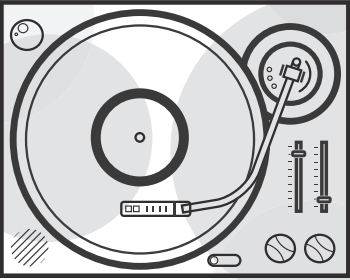
Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk.

Photo by Michael Newman


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PHD • JORGE CHAM

THE SCENE

Aries
Get startled by an epiphany. Creative ideas spark. Advance through private connections. You're tuned into the flow of the game today and tomorrow. Love flowers.

Taurus
Home and family have your focus today and tomorrow. Listen to an elder, who's been where you're going. Take advantage of favorable conditions for domestic renewal.

Gemini
Write, record and share your views over the next few days. Research and networking projects go well. Don't make wild promises. Meet your deadlines.

Cancer
Cash flow improves. There's more work coming in today and tomorrow, and it could get profitable. Keep accounts balanced. Fix up old before buying new.

Leo
Take action for a personal passion today and tomorrow. A sudden move changes the entire game. Focus to make your targets. Ask for what you want.

Virgo
Notice your dreams over the next few days. Slow down and consider where you're going. Postpone unnecessary trips and make an overdue change at home.

Libra
Work with groups and teams over the next two days. Avoid gossip and controversy, and treat people respectfully. Friends help you make a valuable connection.

Scorpio
Unexpected professional opportunities require quick action. There may be a test today or tomorrow; dress for success. Negotiate a shrewd deal.

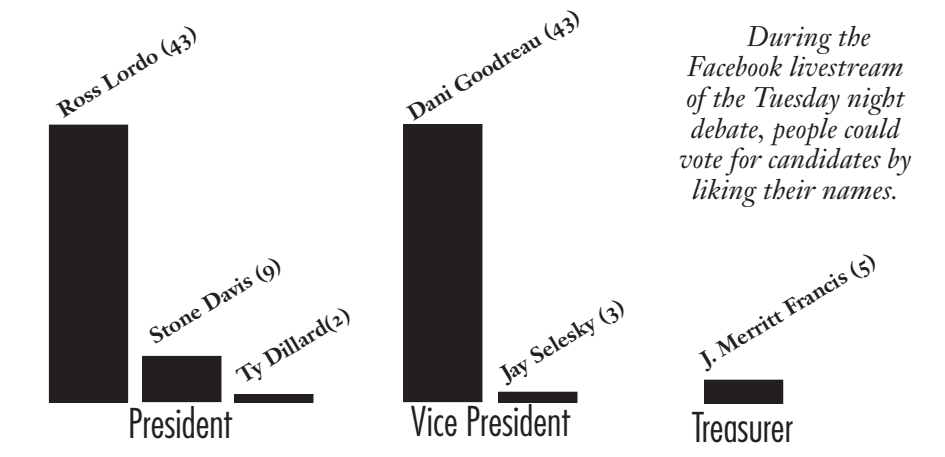
Sagittarius
Explore new cultures, views and flavors today and tomorrow. Walk and talk. Alternate between physical exercise and quiet reverie. Follow emotion as well as logic.

Capricorn
Adapt to changing priorities. Prepare your case to convince a skeptic. Manage financial obligations over the next few days. Save up to invest in your future.

Aquarius
Work with a partner for the next few days. Determine who will do what. Take turns being in charge. The more completed, the more gained.

Pisces
Stay on focus, with a busy schedule today and tomorrow. Plot your moves and make them quickly and decisively. Practice your routine. Get moving.

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Live poll from the executive debate



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Sudoku

By The Mephram Group

2/9/17

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| 4 | | | 8 | | 9 | | | |
| 2 | | | | | 6 | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | 4 | 8 | 6 |

Level 1 2 3 4

How to Play
Complete the grid so each row, column AND 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit 1 to 9.

For solutions to today's puzzle, go to dailygamecock.com or download our app!


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Crossword

Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

2/9/17

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ACROSS

1 Subj. for a non-native speaker

4 ___-top: Beatles' style

7 Much of "Star Wars" FX

10 Clumsy type

13 ___ Michele, 8-Down co-star

14 "The Princess Diaries" princess

15 Tetris shape

16 Sporty truck, briefly

17 War film with a cast of 60-Across?

21 "Rock and Roll All ___": Kiss hit

22 Reckon

23 Custardy dessert

24 Thrown for a loop

26 Cool, once

27 Campus groups

28 Newspaper with a staff of 60-Across?

31 Dough for ramen?

32 Square ___

33 Traveler's aid

37 "Hamlet, thou art slain" speaker

42 Political ___

43 Big name in big tractors

44 1969 hit song by a group of 60-Across?

50 Write in code?

51 Actress Ramirez of "Grey's Anatomy"

55 ___ d'Alene

56 Mideast sultanate

60 Off-putting sorts?

63 Pie choice

64 Like bread knives

65 Well-to-do

66 Unpredictable

DOWN

1 Twisty-horned antelope

2 Photo app effect

3 Founder of Taoism

4 Sport for Ronda Rousey, for short

5 Aromatherapy array

6 Outmoded public convenience

7 Center of moral corruption

8 TV show with mashups

9 Down with something

10 Wanted one

11 Bothered a lot

12 Fronded plants

18 Mediocre marks

19 Sonnet, e.g.

20 Do maintained with a pick

25 Kids' summer activity

27 "Another word for nothin' left to lose," in a Joplin hit

29 ___ Aviv

30 Genetic messenger molecule

33 The Scooby gang's Mystery Machine, e.g.

34 Ode preposition

35 Spell

36 QB's mishap

38 Dream state letters

39 Technical foul signal, in

40 West ender?

41 Place the border

45 Centipede home?

46 Stimulated

47 "Oh, now ___ it!"

48 All-in-one vacation

49 Eliot's weaver

51 Canned meat used in Hawaiian cuisine

52 "The Good Dinosaur" dinosaur

53 Reddish horse

54 Source of cartoon explosives

56 Other, south of the border

57 Castle defense

58 Basic class with easels

59 Tiny time pd.

61 Siegfried collaborator

62 PDX info: Abbr.

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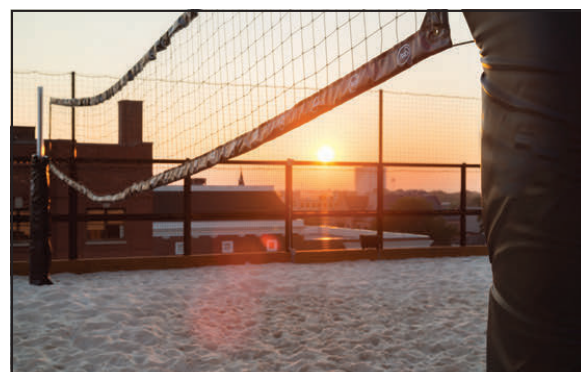
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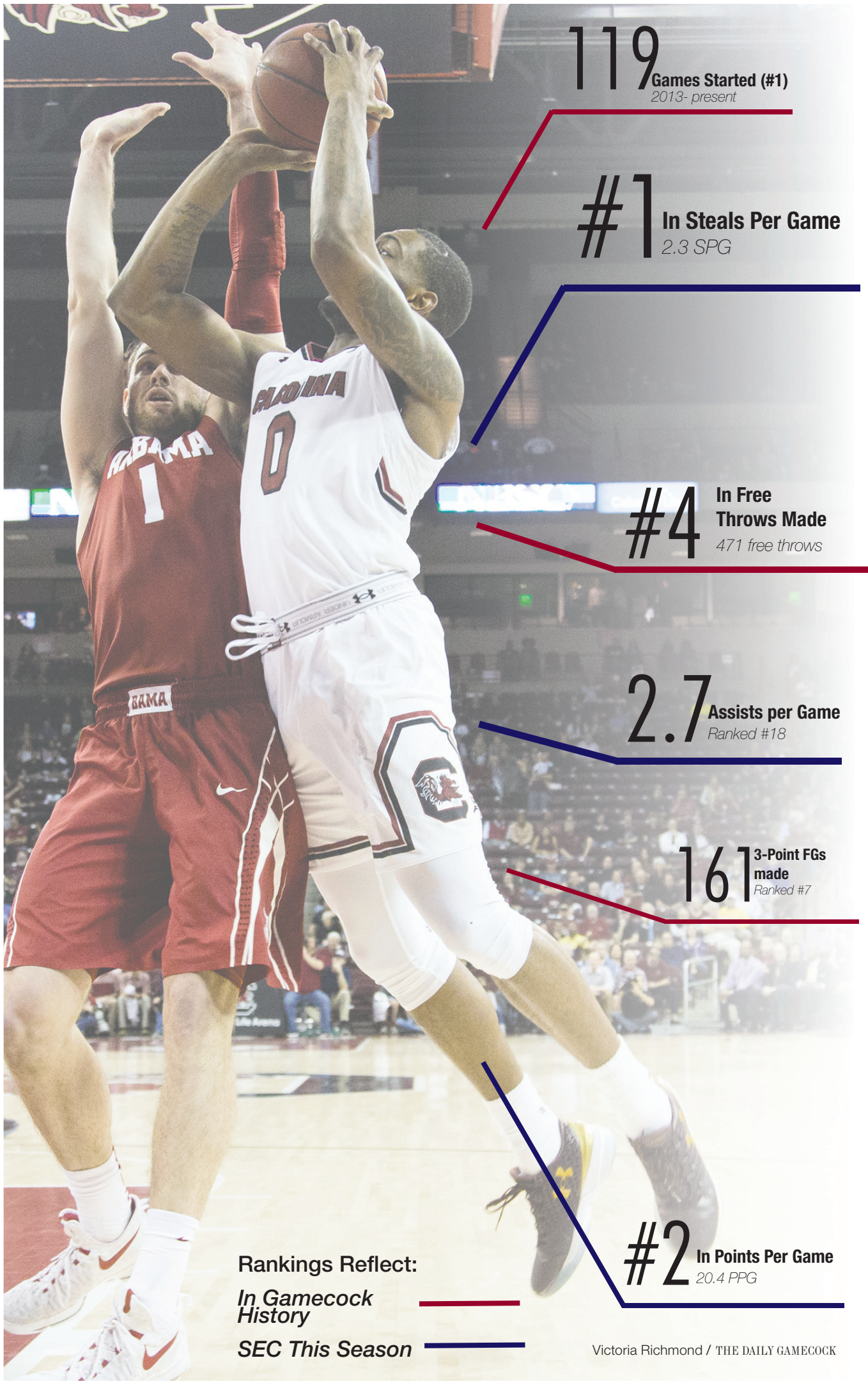
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SINDARIUS

THORNWELL

BY THE NUMBERS



SOFTBALL

Gamecocks
poised for fifth
straight tournament
appearance

Carson Mason
@CARSONANNMASON

With four straight NCAA Tournament appearances under coach Beverly Smith, the South Carolina softball team is poised for another winning season in 2017.

But the Gamecocks will have to outplay some of the best Division I competition to advance to a Super Regional for the first time in 10 years.

South Carolina finished 38-23 overall and 7-17 in the SEC in 2016 and was ranked 24th in Rating Percentage Index (RPI). This season, the Gamecocks are scheduled to play 33 games against teams that appeared in the NCAA Tournament last season. Eighteen of those games will be against teams in last year's Super Regionals and 15 against Women's College World Series teams.

Pitching

Senior pitchers Nickie Blue and Jessica Elliott will return to the mound in 2017. Blue will be a top starter and also will see some time as a reliever. Last season, the 6-foot-1 ace led the Gamecocks in strikeouts, strikeout-to-walk ratio and walks and hits per innings pitched. Similar to Blue, Elliott will be utilized as a starter and reliever. The right-hander started 36 games and had 11 relief appearances last season. She posted a 2.77 ERA with an 18-10 record and threw six complete games in 179.1 innings. The seniors will be joined by three-time South Carolina Gatorade High School Player of the Year Cayla Drotar, as well as junior Hayley Copeland. The coaches are hoping Drotar, a freshman, can help take the burden off the two seniors.

Returning players

Fourteen Gamecocks are returning to the diamond in 2017. The 2016 leading hitter,

Kaylea Snaer, has big things in store for her senior season. The first baseman compiled a team-high 68 hits and 41 RBIs to go with a .374 batting average last year. With power hitters Alaynie Page and Ansley Ard graduating, all eyes will be on Snaer to steer the Gamecock offense.

Outfielder Kennedy Clark is primed to have a standout sophomore season both offensively and defensively. In 2016, the California native set the program record for on-base percentage for a freshman at .430. She batted .310 with 54 hits and 36 RBIs, the third most on the team. Recognized for her outstanding defense, Clark did not commit a single error last season and earned SEC Co-Freshman of the Week honors on March 7.

New faces

The Gamecocks welcome three freshmen and four transfer students this season. With starting catcher Jordan Bizzell graduating in 2016, Penn State transfer Alyssa VanDerveer will be counted on to help fill the void behind home plate. The All-Big Ten catcher hit 24 home runs in her two years with the Nittany Lions. Second baseman Alexis Mack transferred to Oregon at the end of last season, so freshman infielder Mackenzie Boesel is expected to see substantial time there. As Boesel was a shortstop in high school, the Gamecocks' infield defense will likely feature shortstops at three spots, joining sophomore Kenzi Maguire at shortstop and junior Kamryn Watts at third base. Lauren Stewart, a sophomore transfer from Purdue, led the Boilermakers in runs and doubles and she started all 55 games as a freshman. Junior outfielder Shannon Plese transferred from Chattanooga State Community College, after she helped lead the Tigers to the NJCAA Division I World Series in 2015. As a sophomore, she batted .437 with 23 doubles.

The Gamecocks will start the season by hosting the Carolina Classic at the Carolina Softball Stadium at Beckham Field. The tournament will begin with a double-header against Ohio at 3 p.m. and Presbyterian at 5:30 p.m. Friday.

COLUMN

Sindarius Thornwell

deserves SEC Player of the Year

Adam Orfinger
@AORFINGER

For those who didn't watch Tuesday night's men's basketball game, let me give you a quick summary of what happened. South Carolina played really poorly in the first half. Then, Sindarius Thornwell scored 25 second-half points to lead a massive comeback and force overtime. In the eventual four overtimes, Thornwell made big play after big play, but couldn't get enough help to secure a Gamecock victory.

When the final buzzer sounded, the senior guard had scored 44 points and grabbed 21 rebounds while playing an eye-popping 56 minutes. It was probably South Carolina's worst game of the season, and Thornwell carried the team as far as he possibly could, nearly coming out with a win.

There's no question he's the heart and soul of this team (go check out the six games he missed), but what

Thornwell is doing is making waves in the conference.

The Lancaster native is averaging 20.4 points per game, trailing only Kentucky's Malik Monk. What's even more impressive is Thornwell's rebounding stats, averaging 7.7 boards per game as a 6-foot-5 guard, ranking him second in the conference and a full two rebounds per game above the next-highest player at the position.

He stands out on the defensive end as well. Thornwell leads the conference with 2.3 steals per game, and he's often matched up on the opponent's best defender. His conditioning is exceptional, as he's being tested on both ends of the floor while playing a team-high 33.4 minutes per contest.

In addition to filling up the stat sheet, Thornwell's versatility is unmatched. He's played every position on the floor this year, guarding players one through five and running the offense from the wing and the low post. With

starting bigs Maik Kotsar and Chris Silva struggling with foul trouble, the Gamecocks have gone small a lot this season, making Thornwell's flexibility all the more valuable.

Missing six games could be a small knock against the senior, but he's played in every conference game, where his stats have been even more impressive, averaging over 21 points and eight rebounds per game.

He's willed the Gamecocks to victories on several occasions this season, and when PJ Dozier has struggled (or sat out, as he did against Kentucky), it's been on the senior leader to lead the charge for the Gamecocks.

In the SEC, no one plays a more complete game than Thornwell, and there's no player that matters more to his team, especially a team tied for first place in the conference. Thornwell plays grind-it-out basketball, and he's the backbone of the Gamecocks, who wouldn't be 9-2 in SEC play without him.